



No. 95 – October 2008

From the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council,
the social justice and human rights agency of the Catholic Church in Australia

<http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

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Dear Friends,

The Australian Catholic Bishops' 2008 Social Justice Sunday Statement - *A Rich Young Nation: The challenge of affluence and poverty in Australia* - was launched at the Isabel Menton Theatre at Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney on Wednesday, 17 September.

The Australian Catholic Social Justice Council is very grateful to all who were involved in the production, launch and promotion of the Bishops' Statement.

Mrs Jenny Ebsworth of Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Penrith acknowledged the Traditional Custodians and welcomed all in attendance. Professor Julian Disney AO, Chairman of National Anti-Poverty Week, launched the Statement. Ms Elizabeth Proust, business and community leader and Director of Nonprofit Australia, delivered a response.

A growing divide

Professor Julian Disney said that the growing divide that has developed over recent decades

between the relatively privileged and the deeply disadvantaged has now given him cause to concede that 'regrettably, we've probably reached the point where it is appropriate - we have a developing "underclass" in Australia'.

He said that those who are most disadvantaged are becoming more entrenched in two ways - first, in terms of the transmission of poverty through many generations and secondly in terms of the geographic concentration of disadvantage.

This Bishops' Statement renews the call of 1992 when the Catholic Bishops of Australia warned of the emergence of an 'underclass' unless immediate action for justice was taken in our nation's economic systems.

Professor Disney said the 2008 Statement faithfully highlighted the dire circumstances that Indigenous peoples - the original Australians - and many new Australians face amid the affluence of the nation. He said the emphasis on the needs of people who are homeless, those who suffer physical and mental health difficulties and families struggling with violence and abuse highlight the new face of poverty in Australia. 'I think there are many politicians and some in the media who from their own lives believe that they have done it tough - who don't recognise the new face of poverty.'

He said the Statement also emphasises the importance of the extraordinary blow-out in housing costs. 'High housing costs have become a cancer at the heart of our economy and at the heart of our communities - at the heart of families and lives. Some of us have been calling with increasing desperation for action in this area for a decade or two.' He said that 'bad economics' has caused 'a potent cocktail of too much government intervention and not enough.

‘Too much government intervention in the form of distorting tax incentives which drive up housing prices, and not enough in the sense of not enough regulation over predatory lending and other malpractice by banks and other financial institutions. If we had struck a better balance between so-called market forces and government action to... create and sustain a genuine market rather than a short-term distorted market, we wouldn’t have encountered the problems that we now have.’

Professor Disney called on Australian governments to strike an appropriate balance between preserving prosperity and preventing hardship. ‘As a nation we have failed during this time of prosperity to give anything like sufficient attention to those who are most disadvantaged in the community.

‘But we’ve got a chance for redemption. Will we give greater attention to people in hardship when it’s harder for us to do it because it is more likely to be (even if only marginally) at our own personal expense? ... That’s the challenge before us ... We need a sustained and substantial program of action. Not too much symbolism but practical, on-the-ground action.’

Those who are most vulnerable

Speaking of a recent *4 Corners* episode on Australia’s prolonged detention of asylum seekers, Elizabeth Proust said, ‘It was some of the most brutal and violent television I can recall watching. One of the most shameful chapters in our recent history was the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers who came to this country ... This was deliberate government policy which brought people to the brink of despair and beyond ... The stain of that period 2002 - 2005 in particular will take a long time to erase.’

She called for Government’s attention to improving initial support and resettlement services, noting that ‘there are still too few services available for refugees and asylum seekers, and many people live in our communities not knowing, for many years, if they will be allowed to stay or will they be returned to their country of origin.’

Commenting on the needs of Indigenous families and communities, Ms Proust said, ‘The apology to the Stolen Generations earlier this year was a very encouraging start but much more needs to be done. For decades, we have allowed State and Territory Governments to deliver one level of service to the non-Indigenous community and a poorer level (or none at all) to Indigenous communities.’ She said that it is now time to move beyond the law and order focus to providing for the very real and basic needs to our Indigenous communities.

And of struggling families, Elizabeth Proust said, ‘we hear the phrase “working families” too often. One would assume that improving their lot (however they are defined) would be a key priority, given how often it is mentioned. Yet, as with the former government, this one is focused on medium to upper income earners, not the lower end of the income and tax scales.

‘Currently a single adult with no children on the Federal Minimum Wage earns \$512 per week, or \$468 after tax. While this person is arguably better off than a single pensioner, he or she is still paying too much tax, certainly compared to people on higher incomes.

‘The wealthy, already the beneficiaries of major income growth over more than the past decade, and of substantial tax reductions under the Howard Government, will benefit from this. The Government has said nothing about any tax reductions for the poor or for their “working families”. Change would be relatively simple. No 2020 Summit should be needed to sort this out!’

An abiding theme

Bishop Christopher Saunders spoke of how the Church’s social principles of the common good and the preferential option for the poor had been an abiding theme of Social Justice Sunday.

‘It was in 1940, after the Great Depression and during the Second World War, that the Australian Catholic Bishops issued the first Social Justice Sunday Statement ... in the very first Statement, the Bishops Conference proposed that “the need of the poor should be

considered before yielding to the solicitations of luxury.” While the Bishops noted the impossibility that all people should be made equally wealthy or “expected to remain on the same financial level”, they stated then, that “social justice requires that there should be a more equitable division of human possessions”.

‘It was in that landmark statement, *Common Wealth for the Common Good*, that we warned of the rising levels of serious poverty and the emergence of an underclass of gravely disadvantaged people. That call was made as Australia emerged from the last global recession. Now, over a decade and a half later, we see that for many the conditions of economic deprivation and social exclusion remain, despite the great wealth of our society.’

Bishop Saunders praised the work of Church agencies, the Religious Orders and advocacy groups who have served the poor and pleaded their cause in good times and bad. And he said, ‘in parishes and local communities across Australia, there are tens of thousands of people serving those in need and giving time for the wellbeing of the community. Their shared commitment to the poor is central to the life of the Church. As Pope Benedict said of the Church in his first Encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est* -

“... love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind is as essential to her as the ministry of the sacraments and the preaching of the Gospel.”

‘Those who give of themselves in service to people in need are in many ways “prophetic”. Their efforts stand in the face of a materialism that expects a financial return on any effort, and the consumerism and aggressive media marketing that trains the mind towards wealth and material acquisitions.

‘Those who stand beside the most vulnerable see the need, not only to address poverty, but the challenge of what many refer to as “affluenza” - the broader context within which poverty persists in our society,’ Bishop Saunders said.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference takes encouragement from recent Government announcements concerning social inclusion, homelessness and improvements for refugees and asylum seekers. However, they recognise that more can be done in these areas - particularly in addressing the poverty experienced by many Indigenous communities.

In response to the recent coverage of the inadequacy of the single aged pension, Bishop Saunders concluded that ‘such debate provides hope that Australia’s leaders will, in the words of the Statement, “face the reality of poverty and seek ways to address it, however difficult that might be at a personal or societal level.”’

Catholic Bishops’ Statement and associated resources

Social Justice Sunday was celebrated on 28th September. There are many ways the message of the Bishops’ 2008 statement can be promoted throughout the year and beyond.

The Secretariat still has copies of the Statement for those who would like to place an order. The Statement can be downloaded from the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

There are other resources that are ideal for prayer and worship, personal reflection, discussion in classrooms and among groups. Prayers, teachers’ resources, liturgy notes, the Ten-Steps leaflet and prayer card, PowerPoint presentations and addresses delivered at the launch of the Statement can all be accessed via the ACSJC website.

An associated ecumenical resource has been produced through the Social Justice Network of the National Council of Churches of Australia. Details on this important resource, entitled *Faces of Poverty*, are available on the NCCA website: <http://www.ncca.org.au>. Call NCCA (02) 9299 2215 or ACSJC (02) 8306 3499 for more details.

John Ferguson (National Executive Officer)



Current Issues / Resources

MEDIA RELEASE - 'CATHOLIC BISHOPS CALL FOR ACTION TO ACHIEVE JUSTICE FOR THE POOR IN AUSTRALIA'

The Chairman of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, Bishop Christopher Saunders, said that no matter how well the economy performs, the health of our society can be judged by the treatment of its most vulnerable citizens. 'Following years of prosperity, Australia has the means to act for the common good and with a special concern for the poor. How we use the world's resources and foster human development are concerns for every Australian. What values characterise our daily lives: Have we become obsessed with economic success and material acquisition? Do we recognise those in need and our obligation to do something about it?' In 1992, as Australia emerged from global recession, the Catholic Bishops warned of higher levels of serious poverty and the emergence of an underclass of gravely disadvantaged people. With the 2008 Social Justice Statement the Catholic Bishops of Australia are renewing that call for justice for those afflicted by poverty in our affluent society. (refer: <http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/bishops/confpres/20080917264.htm>)

NEW ZEALAND SOCIAL JUSTICE WEEK: 'LOOK AND LOOK AGAIN: POVERTY IN AN AFFLUENT SOCIETY'

Issuing a statement, *Poverty in an Affluent Society*, New Zealand's Catholic Bishops have restated the Church's commitment to working for people's material as well as spiritual wellbeing, and noted that the economic growth over the last 10 years had not been shared by all. The theme of their Social Justice week theme is fleshed out in resources produced by Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand. Its core booklet includes the Bishops' statement, as well as stories from Catholic social justice and social service agencies, highlighting the experience of poverty in New Zealand. Michael Smith, CEO of Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand said, 'These words are an invitation to look beyond the surface of the issues, to try to perceive poverty from the point of view of

those experiencing financial hardship. How we care for our most vulnerable New Zealanders needs to be the focus of election debates and discussion. For further information visit: www.caritas.org.nz

ANTI-POVERTY WEEK 2008: 12-18 OCTOBER

Anti-Poverty Week focuses on poverty around the world, including Australia. It includes the UN's International Anti-Poverty Day, 17 October. The Week's main aims are to strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship and to encourage research, discussion and action. Last year, more than 300 organisations were involved in activities, with a total participation of more than 10,000 people around the country. Everyone is very welcome to organise an activity during the Week or join in something being organised by other people. The website www.antipovertyweek.org.au includes basic fact sheets, promotional material, a calendar of activities and links to other sources of information and ideas. It also includes contact details for the National Office and the Co-Chairs in each State. For more info or to list activities on the website, contact 1300 797 290 or apw@antipovertyweek.org.au

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES AUSTRALIA - ENTITLEMENTS COMMISSION

CSSA has released a discussion paper calling for the establishment of an independent Entitlements Commission to set and review pensions and other income support payments on an annual basis. Executive Director Frank Quinlan said the Commission would operate at arm's length from government in much the same way as the Fair Pay Commission, the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal and the Reserve Bank of Australia. 'An independent Entitlements Commission would review the adequacy of pensions and other income support payments free of political interference. The Entitlements Commission would be ongoing and the government would appoint members for a fixed period, say for four years. Before making its annual decision,

the Entitlements Commission would call for submissions and hold public consultations,' Mr Quinlan said. For further information on the proposal, visit: <http://www.catholicsocialservices.org.au/node/14716>

EUREKA STREET ARTICLE: 'IT'S TIME TO DITCH GDP'

In a recent contribution to *Eureka Street*, John Wicks critiques neo-liberal or neo-conservative economic philosophy and suggests some key strategies to ensure that Australia does not duplicate, even on a much reduced scale, the sorts of outcomes emanating from the sub-prime fiasco in the United States. Among his suggestions is a questioning of neo-liberal policy prescriptions of the profit-seeking approach to economic activity; finding a better balance between the free market and regulation; and restrictions on unproductive speculation. John Wicks calls for a new measure of national wealth and wellbeing that is more accurate than the 'all inclusive but misleading Gross Domestic Product (GDP) concept'. (refer: <http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=9135#>)

YOUNG CATHOLIC WOMEN'S 2009 INTERFAITH FELLOWSHIP

The National Office for the Participation of Women is running the next Interfaith Fellowship from 30 January to 16 May. The aims of the program are to identify individuals who can take a leadership role in promoting interfaith relations wherever they find themselves in Australian society and enable them to develop partnerships with individuals and groups to address the multi-faith and multicultural dimensions of the Australian and International community. The Fellowship includes: Graduate Certificate in Interfaith Relations; personal and leadership formation; interfaith engagement. The Fellowship is conducted at the Australian Catholic University Signadou Campus, ACT. For information contact (02) 6201 9864 or fellowship.opw@catholic.org.au (refer: <http://www.opw.catholic.org.au>)

RESOURCE - SAFETY FOR CHILDREN IN OUR FAMILIES

'Child Protection Sunday' was observed on 14 September. The theme for the National

Committee for Professional Standards for Child Protection week was 'Safety for Children in Our Families'. Resources including liturgy and homily notes, an information sheet and PowerPoint presentation were developed for the week. The resources are aimed at engaging the broader Catholic community in education about abuse and the effects of abuse on individuals, families and communities. These resources are available by contacting the National Committee on (02) 9387 2400 or reception@ncps.org.au

RESOURCE - BE MY WITNESSES: LIVING AS CHURCH AFTER WYD08

The Young Christian Students and Young Christian Workers have produced a program that focuses on how parishes, schools and communities can support young people to live as witnesses and disciples after World Youth Day. *Be My Witnesses* contains tips and ideas to help pilgrims and parishes turn their WYD08 experiences into new ways forward. It includes activities for reflecting with pilgrims on their journey and strategies for deepening faith, planning action and keeping connected. It also suggests ways that the whole parish can make a lasting space for young people. The resource can be downloaded from the AYCW website or an order form can be downloaded for hard copies of the resource. Visit: <http://www.ycw.org.au/>

CATHOLIC EARTHCARE AUSTRALIA SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

Catholic Earthcare has a new sustainability initiative for the Catholic community in Australia: A Strategic Systems-based Integrated Sustainability Initiative (ASSISI) - for schools, parishes, congregations, health and aged care facilities and other church organisations. The ASSISI for Schools program is being piloted in four schools; Catholic Earthcare Australia is working with the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change, the Catholic Education Commission of NSW, a variety of organisations with technical knowledge, a variety of community organisations, Climate Coolers and Greening Communities. To find out more about ASSISI for Schools and to register your interest, visit: <http://catholicearthcareoz.net/assisi.html>

Latest Publications

(Orders: phone (02) 8306 3499 or download an order form from the ACSJC website [that can be faxed to (02) 8306 3498]: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/TEMPLATE-ORDERFORM.pdf>)

COMING SOON: THE SOCIAL JUSTICE DIARY FOR 2009.

The 2009 Social Justice Diary will be available in early November. This valuable resource includes the dates of significant events, anniversaries and special days which celebrate particular aspects of social justice and highlight the theme. It provides a social justice program for the full year. Information and ideas for prayer and reflection are included. This is an essential resource for teachers and parishes. Cost: \$6.60 (inc. GST), plus postage.

SERIES PAPER - 'TOWARDS A MORE JUST WORLD'.

Duncan MacLaren brings more than 25 years experience with Caritas Internationalis and other NGOs to his examination of how the Church can confront new problems concerning social justice and human rights. Paper No. 63 in the Catholic Social Justice Series uses as a reference point the Second Vatican Council's call for Catholics to 'read the signs of the times'. The paper explains how Catholic social teaching and its basis in the Gospels makes Catholic NGOs different from other agencies. It also suggests areas where Catholic social teaching has to be expanded to address some of the deep-seated problems of the modern world - particularly in the realm of advocacy, peace-building and reconciliation. (\$6.60 a copy, plus postage - postage rates listed below)

SERIES PAPER - 'PALESTINE AND ISRAEL'.

In Catholic Social Justice Series No.62, journalist and author Peter Manning provides a comprehensive analysis of the issues behind the Middle East conflict. Throughout the tragic recent history of the region, the Catholic Church has consistently called for an even-handed, just and sustainable peace in which the claims and needs of both sides are heard.

'Until each side recognises the pain the other is suffering, there is no prospect of justice,' writes ACSJC Chairman Bishop Christopher Saunders in the foreword to the paper. Peter Manning's detailed examination of the key causes of the conflict helps readers understand the reasons for the impasse. (\$6.60 a copy, plus postage - postage rates listed below)

2008 SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY STATEMENT - ORDER NOW!

This year's Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Sunday Statement is entitled 'A Rich Young Nation: The challenge of affluence and poverty in Australia'. The ACSJC is taking orders for the Statement. An order form is available on the ACSJC website. The easiest way to order is to download the order form, make a credit card payment and fax it to (02) 8306 3498. Refer: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

Prayer Card & Leaflet: Ten steps towards eradicating poverty.

Now available. Call (02) 8306 3499

Ecumenical resource: 'Faces of Poverty'.

Now available for download on the National Council of Churches website: <http://www.ncca.org.au/>

Social Justice Sunday Statement Summary, Liturgy Notes, Teachers' Notes and Powerpoint presentation - now available at: www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au

PAMPHLET - 'CALLED TO BE THE GOOD NEWS'

The ACSJC has issued a pamphlet 'Called to be the Good News', which outlines the key principles of Catholic social teaching. It draws on relevant Encyclicals and the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church to highlight the principles of human dignity, the common good, subsidiarity and solidarity. The document, which includes a prayer, is ideal for Catholic organisations, schools and parish groups. Cost 10 copies for \$1.50 including postage. Call (02) 8306 3499.

SERIES PAPER - 'CONFRONTING THE DEATH PENALTY'.

Catholic Social Justice Series No.61 consists of four essays by authoritative writers on the moral, legal and personal aspects of the death penalty. It considers capital punishment in the light of the attacks of September 2001, the international 'war on terror' and the moral and political problems thrown up as we see capital punishment rigorously applied in countries close to us. (\$6.60 a copy, plus postage - postage rates listed below)

(Catholic Social Justice Series papers and the Social Justice Diary: \$6.60 a copy, plus postage. Postage rates for Catholic Social Justice Series Papers: 1 copy \$1; 2-3 copies \$1.45; 4-5 copies \$2.45)

Orders: phone (02) 8306 3499, fax (02) 8306 3481 or download an order form from the ACSJC website: <http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/CONTENT/PDF/TEMPLATE-ORDERFORM.pdf>

This Month's Notices

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER. EXHIBITION:

'IN LIVING MEMORY' (NSW). An exhibition of surviving photographs from 1919 to 1966 from the records of the NSW Aborigines Welfare Board, presented by State Records NSW and NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Exhibition talks and tours for groups of 5 to 20 people, weekdays between 10.00am and 4.00pm. Call (02) 8247 8660 for enquiries and bookings. Mon - Fri 9.00am - 5.00pm, Sat 10.00am - 4.00pm. Free entry. State Records Gallery, Sydney Records Centre, 2 Globe Street (off George Street), The Rocks. Enquiries: (02) 8247 8660 or (02) 8247 8609. Web: http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/archives/whats_on_at_the_state_records_gallery_8327.asp.

30 SEPTEMBER - 3 OCTOBER. THE 4 Rs CONFERENCE - RIGHTS, RECONCILIATION, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY (NSW). The 4Rs international conference at the University of Technology Sydney frames Australia's future as a cosmopolitan civil society. The conference examines four themes: human rights, Indigenous advancement, inter-communal relations and active citizenship. Convened by Prof. Andrew Jakubowicz, Director, Centre for Cosmopolitan Civil Societies, University of Technology Sydney. Information and registration: <http://www.the4rsconference.org>.

1 OCTOBER. SEMINAR: 'A SPACE TO SPEAK - CHALLENGING REPRESENTATIONS OF CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES' (VIC). Presented by La Trobe University Refugee

Health Research Centre with Caitlin Nunn, Research Officer, The Refugee Health Research Centre, La Trobe University/Foundation House. Registration 5.00pm, Seminar: 5.30 to 6.30pm, Foundation House, 6 Gardiner Street, Brunswick, Vic. Further information: rhr@latrobe.edu.au or (03) 9479 5874 or visit www.latrobe.edu.au/rhrc/conferences.html.

2 OCTOBER. DISCUSSION: WORDS, IMAGES VOICES - LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS THAT SPEAKS OF JUSTICE (NSW). Presented by the Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education and the Institute for Advancing Community Engagement, Australian Catholic University. Teachers, librarians and parents are warmly invited to a panel discussion with leaders in the field of children's literature, including Libby Gleeson AM, Nadia Wheatley, Susanne Gervay, Melina Marchetta and Dr Robin Morrow. 2.00 - 4.00pm, Gleeson Auditorium, ACU National Strathfield Campus. Bookings close 26 September. Cost: \$25.00. For information and application form: http://www.erc.org.au/index.php?module=documents&JAS_DocumentManager_op=viewDocument&JAS_Document_id=153.

2 OCTOBER. FORUM: 'CLIMATE CHANGE, ENERGY & EQUITY' (VIC). What does climate change mean for low income and vulnerable households? How can the community sector ensure that responses to the 'diabolical challenge' are equitable, timely and effective? The Hon Penny Wong, Minister for Climate

Change and Water will address these issues during the half-day forum hosted by ACOSS and VCOSS. 9:30 am - 12.30pm, St Michael's Centre, 120 Collins Street, Melbourne. For more information call 02 9310 6200. Web: <http://www.acoss.org.au/Events.aspx?displayID=1>

2 - 4 OCTOBER. CONFERENCE - 'DISCOVERING BALANCE: PRISON REFORM, RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS' (WA). Hosted by the Institute for Restorative Justice and Penal Reform and the Centre for Social and Community Research, Murdoch University. The *Discovering Balance* conference will explore issues relating to penal reform, restorative justice and human rights. Speakers include Prof. David Brown (UNSW), Prof. Andrew Coyle (Kings College London), Prof. Richard Harding (Inspector of Custodial Services, WA), Steven Heath (Chief Magistrate, WA), Ian Johnson (Commissioner, WA Department of Corrective Services), Prof. John Pratt (Victoria University of Wellington, NZ), Hon. Margaret Quirk (Minister for Corrective Services), Baroness Vivien Stern (Kings College London), Prof. Hilde Tubex (Department of Corrective Services). Email: conference@irjpr.net.au. Tel: (08) 9325 5766. Web: <http://irjpr.net.au/conference/>.

2 - 5 OCTOBER. CONFERENCE: 'CHRISTIAN MISSION IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE' (ACT). Papers on all streams of missiology, including public theology, history, contextual mission and global mission. Speakers will include Professor Nico Koopman, Director of the Beyers Naudé Centre for Public Theology, Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Details, and brochure, available at: www.missionstudies.org/au. Standard and concession rates: Registration \$240/\$150. Day registration: \$100. Conference enquiries: (02) 6272 6201. Email jpitman@csu.edu.au or kchambers@csu.edu.au

3 OCTOBER. 2008 PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE (VIC). This event will discuss developments in the protection of human rights by Australian charters and human rights acts. The conference provides an important opportunity to examine the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and

Responsibilities, the ACT Human Rights Act and other charters of rights. The day is aimed at both a legal and non-legal audience. Melbourne Law School, University of Melbourne, 185 Pelham Street, Carlton. Enquiries: (03) 8344 1011 or law-cccs@unimelb.edu.au. Web: <http://cccs.law.unimelb.edu.au>.

3 OCTOBER. THE LONG WALK 2008 WOMEN'S LUNCHEON, 'CELEBRATING OUR JOURNEYS' (VIC). The Long Walk Women's Luncheon will be held at the Peninsula at Central Pier, Docklands, Melbourne. The luncheon will celebrate the journeys of the women who walked to Canberra, The Long Walk's journey to charity status, and the journeys of women who demonstrate that leadership happens in the Indigenous community through our everyday working lives, cultural practice and family business. Guest speakers Karen Atkinson and Tammy Hunter. MC Kylie Belling and performance by the Liz Cavanagh Big Band. For information or to make a booking contact The Long Walk Administration c/- Essendon Football Club, Napier St, Essendon on (03) 9230 0362. Web: <http://www.thelongwalk.com.au/7859650/the-long-walk-womens-luncheon-2008.htm>

3 OCTOBER. PUBLIC LECTURE: 'THEORY AND PRACTICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTIVE PRESENCE' (VIC). Rohan Martynes will share his experience at Peace Brigades International in relation to the theory and practice of international protective presence. 12.30 - 2.00pm, Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies Melbourne Office, Level 11, 14 Queens Road, Melbourne (across the road from Albert Park Lake). Web: <http://www.uq.edu.au/acpacs/seminars-in-melbourne>

7 OCTOBER. SEMINAR, 'WHOSE EARTH IS IT?' (NSW). As part of the 'The Earth: Who Cares? People of faith do!' series of interactive interfaith seminars, the Faith Ecology Network will consider practical action for ecological sustainability among the faith groups and in the world. 6.30 - 8.30pm, Mitchell Theatre, Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt St, Sydney. For further information contact annelanyon.cmi@columban.org.au.

8 OCTOBER. FORUM: 'CREATING A NEW PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT AND THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR' (VIC). The Australian Council of Social Service is hosting a forum where representatives of the Not-for-Profit Sector and concerned citizens will consider how it can work in partnership with the Government to build social inclusion and improve the lives of Australians. The Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Sen. the Hon. Ursula Stephens will be attending. 9:00am - 1.00pm, Footscray Community Arts Centre, 45 Moreland Street, Footscray. Registration forms can be downloaded at www.acoss.org.au, or contact 02 9310 6203, or compact@acoss.org.au. Web: <http://www.acoss.org.au/Events.aspx?displayID=1>

8 OCTOBER. LECTURE: 'CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE DIALOGUE OF CULTURES' (VIC). Climate change has rightly come to occupy centre stage in national and international politics. Diverse stakeholders have focused on the technical and economic solutions to the problem. Culture has been strangely absent in these discussions, yet is central to any viable solutions. Prof. Joseph Camilleri will address two questions: Is culture destined to be part of the problem or part of the solution? How well prepared are we to bring the 'dialogue of cultures' to bear on the Great Debate? 6:30 - 7.30pm, Copland Theatre, Economics & Commerce Building (bldg 148), University of Melbourne, Parkville. For information call (03) 8344 6564 or email peter.vdm@unimelb.edu.au. Web: <http://events.unimelb.edu.au/event/5203/>

8 OCTOBER. LECTURE: 'BEYOND OCCUPATION: EXAMINING THE NEW REALITY IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE' (VIC). Dr. Sara Roy, a senior research scholar at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University, will examine the social and economic sectors of the Palestinian Islamic movement and their relationship to Islamic political institutions, and the critical changes to the Islamic movement that have occurred over the last seven years. Her primary findings point to a restructuring and de-radicalization of the Islamist movement in the West Bank

and Gaza Strip prior to the start of the second Palestinian uprising. 6.30 - 8.30pm, Theatre A, Elisabeth Murdoch Building (bldg 134), University of Melbourne, Parkville. For information contact (03) 8344 5554 or dcs@unimelb.edu.au. Web: <http://events.unimelb.edu.au/event/5262/>

8 OCTOBER. FORUM: 'JUSTICE v PEACE: DOES INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW HELP POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES?' (VIC). What is the role of justice in war-torn societies? Is it a useless expenditure of limited resources, or a necessary part of rebuilding a strong country and healing the wounds of conflict? Will the execution of International Criminal Court arrest warrants help or hinder international and internal peace? Speakers, Sir Ninian Stephen, Prof. Tim McCormack and Mr Alpha Lisimba, address these and other issues concerned with the stabilisation of post-conflict societies. 6.30 - 7.30pm, Theatre G08, Melbourne Law School (bldg 106), 185 Pelham Street, Carlton. For further info and to RSVP contact law-mjil@unimelb.edu.au or (03) 8344 7913. Web: <http://events.unimelb.edu.au/event/5293/>

10 OCTOBER. FORUM: 'CREATING A NEW PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT AND THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR' (ACT). The Australian Council of Social Service is hosting this forum. The Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Sen. the Hon. Ursula Stephens, will be attending. 9:00am - 1.00pm, Canberra Southern Cross Club, 92 - 96 Corinna Street, Woden, ACT. Registration forms can be downloaded at www.acoss.org.au, or contact 02 9310 6203, or compact@acoss.org.au. Web: <http://www.acoss.org.au/Events.aspx?displayID=1>

10 OCTOBER. DINNER EVENT: 'THE POLITICS OF DRUGS AND DEATH' (QLD). Dr Alex Wodak will speak at this event hosted by the Australian Association of Consultant Physicians. Dr Wodak will be supported by Dr Denis Bartrum, Ipswich Base Hospital Emergency Centre, and Mr Tony Trimmingham OAM, founder of Family Drug Support. AACP patron Stephen Keim QC will be introduced by Camilla Cowley, to open the night. From 6.30 for a 7.00pm

start, Western Districts Rugby F.C., Memorial Park, Sylvan Rd, Toowong. \$45 per head. RSVP by 3 October to 0405 721 617 or email Don.Sinnamon@gmail.com

10 OCTOBER. SEMINAR: 'THE CRISIS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SRI LANKA' (NSW). With Professor Ivan Shearer, Shiva Pasupati, and Dr Manuelpillai, Paul Dominic, Dr Brian Seniveratne. 3.00 - 5.00pm, Professorial Board Room, Main Quad, The University of Sydney, Broadway. RSVP to law.scil@usyd.edu.au.

10 - 12 OCTOBER. WORKSHOP: 'ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT IN PRISON' (ACT). AVP workshops seek to empower people to lead non-violent lives through affirmation, respect for all, community building, co-operation and trust. The Basic workshop explores interpersonal conflict resolution skills by learning through doing. Information: (02) 6251 0037 or (02) 6251 2942; Web www.avp.org.au or email peacefulpathways.avp@gmail.com.

11 OCTOBER. SYMPOSIUM: 'THOU SHALT NOT KILL...?' (NSW). An All-day Symposium hosted by the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, the University of Sydney, a range of speakers will consider what the world's major religions say about war and peace and how they are used and abused to justify violence. Speakers include: Jonathan Inkipin, General Secretary, New South Wales Ecumenical Council, Dr Ken Macnab of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, and Marion Maddox, author of 'God Under Howard'. Cost: \$50 including refreshments and buffet lunch. 9.00am - 4.30pm, Wool Room, International House, The University of Sydney. For more information contact (02) 9351 7686 or arts.cpac@usyd.edu.au. Web: <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/centres/cpac/news/events.shtml>

11 - 14 OCTOBER. VOICES FOR JUSTICE 2008: MICAH CHALLENGE NATIONAL GATHERING (ACT). The gathering will pray, worship, learn and engage in conversations with our nation's leaders calling for global poverty to be halved by 2015. The 2008 program, held during Anti-Poverty week, promises opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to be transformed by the Spirit, so we can

help transform our world. Speakers: Rev Dr Joel Edwards, Chair of Micah Challenge International and Chairperson of the World Evangelical Alliance; Dr Melba Padilla Maggay, President of the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture; Tim Dixon, political advisor, lawyer and economist; and Bruce Baird (State and Federal parliamentarian). Information: <http://www.micahchallenge.org.au/pages/content.asp?plid=205>; email voices@micahchallenge.org.au or phone: 0411 772 918 or (02) 9453 1586.

12 - 18 OCTOBER. ANTI-POVERTY WEEK (NATIONAL). Anti-Poverty Week focuses on poverty around the world, including Australia. The major aims of the week are to strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty and hardship, and to encourage research, discussion and action to address these problems. Last year, over 300 organisations and more than 10,000 people were involved in activities across the country. Everyone is welcome to organise activities or join in something being organised by other people. The activities can be large or small, and activities at local levels are especially welcome. Please refer to the website for basic fact sheets, promotional material, a calendar of activities, and links to other sources for information and ideas. Telephone: 1300 797 290; Email: apw@antipovertyweek.org.au; Web: <http://www.antipovertyweek.org.au>

13 - 15 OCTOBER. CONFERENCE: 'SOCIAL INCLUSION: AN AGENDA FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS' (QLD). Catholic Social Services Australia's national conference will provide a timely opportunity to review elements of the significant 'social inclusion' agenda. Key issues addressed will include the inquiry into the taxation of the charities sector, the viability of the church and charitable sector, geographic disadvantage, child protection, the nexus between mental health and long-term unemployed people, and more. Speakers include: Patricia Faulkner AO, Chair Australian Social Inclusion Board; Mons. David Cappo, Vice Chair, Australian Social Inclusion Board; Robert Fitzgerald AM, Commissioner, Productivity Commission; Lin Hatfield-Dodds, President, ACOSS; and Tim Fischer, Ambassador designate to the Holy See. The conference is

a public event, open to NGOs, public servants and the wider community. The conference will be convened at Rydges, South Bank, in Brisbane. For program and registration details, visit the website: <http://www.catholicsocialservices.org.au/conference08> or contact 02 6285 1366 or email admin@catholicsocialservices.org.au

14 OCTOBER. PUBLIC LECTURE: 'HUMAN COSTS OF WEAPONS TRADE' (VIC). The arms fair planned for Adelaide in November (cancelled following a public outcry) highlighted issues including Australia's expanding weapons export industry, and the proliferation of arms in our region. Dr Mark Zirnsak, Director of the Justice and International Mission Unit of the Uniting Church, and Dr Melanie Archer, forensic entomologist, will address the effects of this spread of arms: both the big picture, and in a nearby country. 7.00 - 8.15pm, Level 2 meeting room, Alan Gilbert Building, corner of Grattan and Barry Streets, Carlton. RSVP on (03) 8344 1637 or mapw@mapw.org.au. Web: <http://www.mapw.org.au/events/human-costs-weapons-trade>

14 OCTOBER. WORKSHOP: 'TRAUMA AND CULTURE' (NSW). Dr Robert Grant, Director of Organisation Health and Development and the International Trauma Centre of St John of Health Care NSW, will conduct the one-day workshop for professionals regularly working with traumatised populations. Cost: \$250. Lunch, morning and afternoon teas provided. 9.00am - 5.30pm, St John of God Hospital, The Education Centre, 13 Grantham St, Burwood. RSVP on (02) 9715 9287. Web: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/index.html>

15 OCTOBER. SEMINAR: 'THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF HUMANS AND OTHER SPECIES' (NSW). As part of the 'The Earth: Who Cares? People of faith do!' series of interactive interfaith seminars, the Faith Ecology Network will consider practical action for ecological sustainability among the faith groups and in the world. 6.30 - 8.30pm, Mitchell Theatre, Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt St, Sydney. For further information contact annelanyon.cmi@columban.org.au.

16 OCTOBER. FORUM: 'MICAH CHALLENGE & THE UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS' (VIC). Rev Joel Edwards, incoming Director of Micah Challenge International and member of the Equality and Human Rights Commission UK will consider what has been achieved, and what more needs to be done. Event sponsored by Social Policy Connections and Victoria Council of Churches. Entry by donation. 3.00 - 4.00pm, Yarra Theological Union, 98 Albion Rd, Box Hill. For information contact (03) 9890 1077 or info@socialpolicyconnections.com.au. Web: www.socialpolicyconnections.com.au

16 OCTOBER. LECTURE: 'THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE FOR INDIGENOUS YOUNG PEOPLE' (ACT). Grant Paulson, assisted by Sondra Paulson, will deliver the 2008 David Hunter Memorial Lecture. Grant Paulson works as a Relationships Manager at Reconciliation Australia and oversees the development of Reconciliation Action Plans with corporations, community organisations and higher education. 6.30 - 8.30pm, Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, 15 Blackall St, Barton, ACT. For further information contact (02) 6288 0679.

17 OCTOBER. SEMINAR: 'THE GLOBAL EMERGENCY AND THE NEED FOR NEW RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES' (QLD). An illustrated presentation by Graeme Taylor will explain the disastrous impacts of increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases; why new systems-based views, values and technologies make rapid constructive change possible; and how these developments affect the priorities of researchers, educators and students. The presentation will be followed by a discussion. 12:00 - 1:30pm, Building 69, Room 110, University of Queensland, St. Lucia. Information: (07) 334 67593 or acpacs@uq.edu.au. Web: <http://www.uq.edu.au/acpacs/seminars-in-brisbane>

17 OCTOBER. SEMINAR: 'RIGHTS AND REDEMPTION: HISTORY, LAW AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE' (ACT). A seminar hosted by the Centre for International and Public Law, the National Centre for Indigenous People and the Australian Centre for Indigenous History on the book of the same title by Ann Curthoys, Ann Genovese and Alexander Reilly. 1.45 - 5.30pm, National Europe Centre, 1 Liversidge Street,

Building 67C, Australian National University, ACT. Free event. For information or to RSVP contact (02) 6125 1096 or rsvp@law.anu.edu.au. Web: <http://law.anu.edu.au/cipl/events.asp>

21 OCTOBER. LECTURE: 'FORSAKEN VOICES' (NSW). Lulu Mitsahbu, born in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and now working with Caritas Australia, will discuss the impacts of the ongoing conflict in DRC; more than 1200 people dying every day and 2000 raped in a month, 30000 child soldiers and investigate the operations of Australian mining companies in DRC. Lulu will speak at the The Uni of Notre Dame as part of the Philip Neri Lecture Series. Bishop Terry Brady will introduce the event and Mr Anthony Cleary (Director of RE and Evangelisation) from the Catholic Education Office will respond. 7.00pm, The University of Notre Dame, Sydney campus. Web: http://www.caritas.org.au/AM/Template.cfm?Section=What_s_on&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=4365

22 OCTOBER. SEMINAR: 'HOW DO WE INHABIT THE EARTH?' (NSW). As part of the 'The Earth: Who Cares? People of faith do!' series of interactive interfaith seminars, the Faith Ecology Network will consider practical action for ecological sustainability among the faith groups and in the world. 6.30 - 8.30pm, Mitchell Theatre, Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt St, Sydney. For

further information contact annelanyon.cmi@columban.org.au.

24-25 OCTOBER. SEMINAR: 'INTRODUCING CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING' (SA). This seminar in Adelaide, organised by the Loyola Institute, will address the question 'What is Catholic Social Teaching?' Topics to be covered include: sources, key principles, and how it can help us to live a faith that does justice. Friday 6.00 - 8.00pm, Saturday 9.00am - 1.00pm - For further information contact Noelle Haddad, Office Administrator, Ph (02) 8918 4152 Email : loyola@loyola.org.au Web: http://loyola.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=46&Itemid=71

5 NOVEMBER. CITY OF SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE LECTURE 2008 (NSW). Sydney Peace Prize winner, Patrick Dodson, will deliver the annual Peace Prize Lecture at the Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House. 6.30 for 7.00pm. Tickets available from Opera House on (02) 9250 7777 or www.sydneyoperahouse.com. Web: <http://www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au/index.shtml>

6 NOVEMBER. SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE AWARD CEREMONY & GALA DINNER (NSW). Award ceremony and gala dinner at the Great Hall, The University of Sydney. 7.30 pm. For more information contact Sydney Peace Foundation on (02) 9351 4468 or spf@arts.usyd.edu.au Web: <http://www.sydneypeacefoundation.org.au>

News Monitor

Wealth gap requires response: Martino

The growing global gap between the world's rich and poor requires a Gospel approach to combating poverty, Vatican Cardinal Renato Martino said at a pan African conference in Tanzania.

Migration "an emergency": Pope

Although migration existed since the dawn of humanity, it now become "an emergency", Pope Benedict said.

Caritas worker fears for Congo

Born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Caritas Australia worker Lulu Mitshabu said her native country is now in an immeasurably worse condition than when she fled.

Venezuelan gets Vatican asylum

The Holy See granted diplomatic asylum to a 34 year old former student and political dissident wanted by the Venezuelan Govt on charges of attempted murder and lascivious acts against a female police officer.

Human Rights Commission to review religious freedom

The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission announced a national review of what Australians think about freedom of religion and belief.

Call for amnesty for trafficked women

The Federal Government should provide an amnesty for victims of trafficking now living illegally in Australia, a coalition of Catholic women religious said.

Bishops slam consumerism and growing "underclass"

In this year's Social Justice Statement, Australia's Catholic Bishops slammed consumerism and the emergence of a severely disadvantaged underclass.

Execution is torture: Priest tells Indon Constitutional Court

An Australian priest testified that execution by shooting is torture, in a case brought

before Indonesia's Constitutional Court by the convicted Bali bombers.

Catholics in vigil for detained Malaysian MP
Parishioners at a Kuala Lumpur parish held a vigil for a Member of Parliament and practising Catholic, Teresa Kok, who been detained under the country's Internal Security Act.

Zimbabwean bishops welcome power sharing deal
Zimbabwe's Catholic bishops welcomed the signing of a power sharing agreement between President Robert Mugabe and opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai.

Don't play politics with pensions: CSSA warns
Catholic Social Services Australia called on the Federal Government to establish an independent commission to set and review pensions and support payments in order to avoid "politicising" the issue.

Courtesy CathNews - click on headlines for more, or go to <http://cathnews.com>



Social Justice Calendar

1 WED International Day of Older Persons
Second Bali bombing, 2005

2 THU Mahatma Ghandi born, 1869
Shooting in Amish community,
Pennsylvania, USA, 2006

3 FRI Day of Jewish and Christian Dialogue

4 SAT St Francis of Assisi
World Space Week commences: First
Sputnik launched by the Soviet Union,
1957
World Animal Welfare Day

5 SUN 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time

6 MON UN World Teachers Day

7 TUE World Habitat Day

8 WED International Day for Natural Disaster
Reduction

9 THU World Post Day

10 FRI Treaty on the Exploration and Use of
Outer Space, 1967
World Mental Health Day

11 SAT Opening Session of Vatican Council II,
1962

12 SUN 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Anti-Poverty Week begins
Bombs explode at Bali's Kuta Beach,
2002

13 MON International Water Week
International Day for Natural Disaster
Reduction

15 WED World Rural Women's Day

16 THU World Food Day

Rigoberta Menchu Tum (Guatemala) receives Nobel Peace Prize, 1992, in acknowledgement of her work for human rights of indigenous people - first Indigenous recipient

17 FRI International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

19 SUN 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

World Mission Sunday

Beatification of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, 2003

Sinking of Siev X, 2001

20 MON International Week Without Violence commences

24 FRI United Nations Day

World Development Information Day

Disarmament Week commences

25 SAT Universal Children's Day (Australia)

26 SUN 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

International Teachers Day

Uluru handed back to traditional owners, the Anangu people of Mutitjulu, 1985

- Details of how to order the 2009 Social Justice Calendar, complete with notes, will be announced shortly.

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE COUNCIL PO Box 7246, Alexandria NSW 2015. Tel: (02) 8306 3499, Fax: (02) 8306 3498, Email: admin@acsjc.org.au Website: <http://socialjustice.catholic.org.au>. ACSJC Briefing is sent by email at the beginning of each month (except January). To subscribe or unsubscribe, go to the front page of the website Comments and contributions are also welcome.